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Slim Jim promotional car stolen in California is recovered outside Hillside hotel

By Ilana Arougheti
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The Slim Jim promotional vehicle was found on a transport truck outside a Holiday Inn Express in Hillside. Its custom wran was damaged, but the car was found mostly operational, a Conagra spokesperson said.

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A cross-country charcuterie con job came to a close Friday afternoon when a custom Slim Jim promotional car stolen in California was discovered outside of Chicago.

Slim Jim, a Conagra brand, first discussed the theft publicly on Dec. 16. The car was reported stolen on Dec. 13, while on its way to a video shoot in Los Angeles, Conagra spokeswoman Amy Morgan told the Tribune.

“We were incredibly surprised,” Morgan said. “I think we had all assumed we would never see it again.”

The car was recovered Dec. 22 from the parking lot of a Holiday Inn Express in Hillside. Police came to the hotel after receiving a ping from Sirius XM around 1 p.m., Hillside police spokesperson Andrew Mack told the Tribune. The car had been loaded onto a transport trailer.

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Some cars equipped with Sirius XM radio have a tracking feature, which can be used by law enforcement to recover stolen vehicles, Mack said.

"I suppose the fact that it's a fancy-looking car probably contributes to the appeal of it," Mack said.

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The Slim Jim car is a relatively new asset for Conagra, Morgan said. The brand's usual fare is shelf-stable meat sticks containing a mix of beef, pork and chicken.

The flamboyant vehicle's travels came to life as part of a partnership between Slim Jim and WWE that was announced in August. The car has been a staple at WWE wrestling events around the country, including the Survivor Series tournament in Rosemont on Nov. 25.

The car recently starred in a series of Slim Jim commercials along with WWE wrestler LA Knight, who crushed 24 opponents in the Slim Jim Battle Royal wrestling competition this summer.

The Slim Jim vehicle, a custom Nissan Z nicknamed "Fast Meat," has built a cult following online. Slim Jim took to X, formerly Twitter, to encourage fans of the brand to keep an eye out for the missing meat mobile.

Slim Jim also posted a redacted police report last week, clapping back at those who called the theft a publicity stunt.

"There's been by and large a very positive response from the community," Morgan said. "It's an engaged community already, but just knowing them, this could be an opportunity to get them further invested in the car."

Hillside police found the vehicle on a transport trailer and towed it to a secure parking lot. The car was found with its custom graphics and decal wrappings partially removed.

The recovered roadster is currently in an Illinois garage awaiting repairs to its exterior wrap. Fast Meat came back to its owners "fairly operational," Morgan said. When it hit

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the road, Fast Meat came equipped with a custom Slim Jim dispenser in the glove box and custom Slim Jim holders on the dashboard and seat belts. Word is still out on if the thieves took souvenirs.

Slim Jim declined to press charges against the operator of the transport trailer, Mack said. No arrests have been made as investigations continue in Hillside and in Los Angeles County, where the car was stolen.

“It was a very, very unfortunate incident,” Morgan said. “Being able to really turn to the community to help us, in a time that was ultimately not the best experience for our brand — they’ve been able to really help us turn this around.”

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